

Statues stolen from museums

†2138. SHRI MAHENDRA SAHNI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any information about the number of museums from where statues have been stolen alongwith the number of States including Bihar where these museums are located;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of agencies which have been engaged by Government to investigate into the matter?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Centralised information on this subject is not maintained by this Ministry in respect of Museums under the control of State Governments, local bodies and private societies, trusts etc. However, a report has been received from the State Government of Bihar that 18 bronze idols from Patna Museum were missing on 26th September, 2006, 17 of which have been recovered.

The position in respect of Museums under this Ministry for the last three years is as under:

(i) One Buddha Head (Sarnath) was stolen from the Indian Museum, Kolkata on 29.12.2004.

(ii) One Terracotta toy cart frame and two terracotta wheels have been reported stolen from the Archaeological Museum, Kalibangan, District Hanumangarh, Rajasthan under the Archaeological Survey of India during January, 2006.

(c) The cases of theft in Patna Museum and Indian Museum have been handed over to the Central Bureau of Investigation and the ASI matter has been referred to the Rajasthan Police.

Threat to Ajanta paintings by rain water

2139. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to extensive use of cement in order to conserve the priceless cave paints at Ajanta have been ruined;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.